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(71) Applicant: NEC CORPORATION
Tokyo (JP)

(72) Inventors:
• Uchikawa, Kiyoshi
Minato-ku, Tokyo (JP)
• Endou, Hiroya
Minato-ku, Tokyo (JP)

(74) Representative: Betten & Resch
Reichenbachstrasse 19
80469 München (DE)

(54) Device and method of determining quality of radio communication in a mobile communication system

(57) The device executes quality degradation determining operation only when the received cell is NG-cell. The device calculates the number of OK-cells while at least two NG-cells are received by dividing each duration time of the two NG-cells by cell receiving cycle, and

by summing up the results of the division. Then the device determines that the quality degradation of radio network occurs if the number of OK-cells is less than a predetermined threshold value.

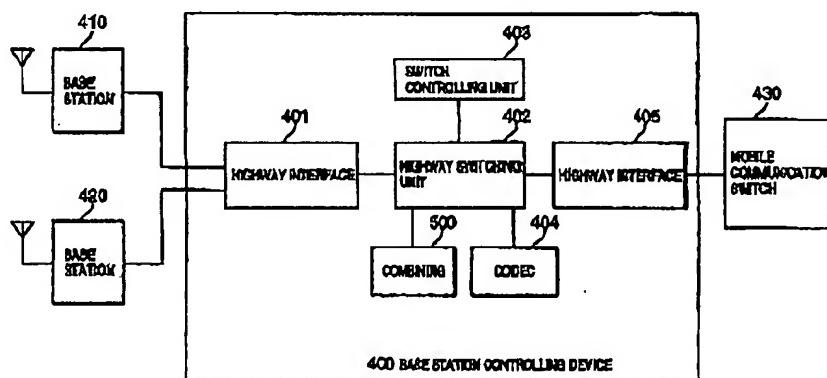


FIG.2

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Description**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION****Field of the Invention**

[0001] The invention relates to a mobile communication system which employs CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) and in particular, to device and method of determining whether or not quality degradation of radio network occurs.

Description of the Related Art

[0002] In the past, there is a method which is used in a radio base station and which determines whether or not quality degradation of radio network occurs by using information which includes status "OK" or "No Good (NG)" each of which represents a result of CRC (Cyclic Redundancy Check) of data (messages), such as cells, given from the radio base station.

[0003] In such a method, CRC operations are carried out over a certain width of window to obtain results. In addition, the number of data (cells) which determined as "NG" in the CRC operations is detected, and the number is compared with a predetermined threshold value. Hereinafter, the cells determined as "NG" in the CRC operations are referred to as "NG-cells", and on the contrary, the cells determined as "OK" in the CRC operations are referred to as "OK-cells".

[0004] When the number of NG-cells is greater than or equal to the threshold value, it is determined that quality degradation of radio network occurs. Otherwise, it is determined that quality degradation does not occurs.

[0005] That is, in the method, the number of NG-cells is counted among a certain number of cells, and when the resulting number is greater than or equal to the predetermined value, it is determined that the quality degradation occurs.

[0006] There is also a previous radio network quality monitoring device which employs the method. The device simply stores a reception history of the OK-cells and the NG-cells based on a window width, and determines quality degradation of radio network by using the stored reception history.

[0007] In this case, however, the device must prepare an amount of memory which can store all of the reception history of calls in the maximum window width. Furthermore, the device is inefficient from points of view of scale of circuit and performance, since the device, in every time the device receives the data (cell), counts the number of NG-cells and determines whether or not the number exceeds the threshold value.

[0008] There may be another previous radio network quality monitoring device which individually includes OK-cells receiving counter and NG-cells receiving counter for each line and which determines the quality degradation of radio network from a value of the NG-

cells counted by the receiving counter at the point when an NG-cell is received. The device, however, is also inefficient since operation of one of the receiving counters is required whenever a cell is received at any line.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION:

[0009] Therefore, it is an object of the invention to provide a device and a method of determining quality degradation of radio network which can reduce processing load for the determination by decreasing the frequency of the processing for the determination.

[0010] According to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of determining quality degradation of a radio network based on results of detecting an error detection each of messages received through the network. The results includes a first state representing detection of an error from each message and a second state representing no detection of any error from each message. The method comprises the steps of storing a first threshold value, estimating the number of the messages of the second state while the number of the first threshold value of the messages of the first state are received, and determining that quality degradation of the radio network occurs when the messages of the second state is less in number than a second predetermined threshold value.

[0011] According to a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a device of determining quality degradation of the radio network based on results of error detection from each of messages received through the network. The results includes a first state representing detection of an error from each message and a second state representing no detection of any error from each message. And the device comprises a detector which informs of only existences of the messages of the first state which are detected by the error detection, a storage device which stores a first threshold value and a second threshold value, an estimating circuit which estimates the number of the messages of the second state received while the number of the first threshold value of messages of the first state are received, and a determining circuit which determines that quality degradation of the radio network occurs when the number of the messages of the second state is less than the second threshold value.

[0012] According to a third aspect of the invention, there is provided a computer readable medium which stores a program operable for determining quality degradation of the radio network based on results of detecting an error from each of messages received through the network. The results includes a first state representing detection of an error from each message and a second state representing no detection of any error from each message. And the program comprises the steps of storing a first threshold value, estimating the number of the messages of the second state

received while the number of the first threshold value of the messages of the first state are received, and determining that quality degradation of the radio network occurs when the number of the messages of the second state is less than a second predetermined threshold value.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

[0013]

Fig. 1 schematically shows a block diagram of the previous upstream combining device;
 Fig. 2 shows a block diagram of a base station controlling device 400 according to an embodiment of the invention;
 Fig. 3 schematically shows a block diagram of an upstream combining device 500 shown in Fig. 2;
 Fig. 4 shows a layout of a determination table 200;
 Fig. 5 shows a flowchart representing operations of determining quality degradation of radio network of the invention;
 Fig. 6A shows an example of timing chart of receiving cells;
 Figs. 6B-6G show examples of contents of the determination table 200 at the timings shown in Fig. 6A.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT:

[0014] At first, the previous device of monitoring quality of radio network is described with reference to Fig. 1. Fig. 1 shows a configuration of a previous upstream combining device 600. The upstream combining device 600 is located in a base station controlling device and monitors the quality degradation of radio network.

[0015] The device 600 includes an upstream frame receiving unit 610, a combining unit 620, a controlling unit 630, and an upstream frame sending unit 640. The controlling unit 630 further includes a degradation determining unit 631, a setting value storing unit 632, a timer unit 633, and a reception history storing unit 634.

[0016] The combining unit 620 informs the degradation determining unit 631 of a result of CRC operation whenever a cell is received. The timer unit 633 clocks the current time when the cell is received, and informs the degradation determining unit 631 of the current time. Thereafter, the degradation determining unit 631 stores the result of the CRC operation and the current time into the reception history storing unit 634. Then, the degradation determining unit 631 monitors quality of the radio network based on a degradation threshold value stored in the setting value storing unit 632 and the reception history stored in the reception history storing unit 634. Specifically, the degradation determining unit 631 refers to a predetermined number of recent results of CRC operations, calculates the ratio of NG-cells, and compares the ratio with the degradation threshold value

to determine that quality of the radio network is degraded when the ratio exceeds the degradation threshold value.

[0017] Next, description is made about a device for monitoring quality of radio network of an embodiment of the invention. The device according to the invention executes determination operation only when NG-cells are received. They do nothing when OK-cell is reached. Thereby, the device may work more efficiently.

[0018] The device combines receiving data (cells) which are sent from one of radio base stations. When the received cell is NG-cell, the device stores the received time (or detected time) of the received NG-cell, calculates the difference between the received time and previously stored received time of preceding NG-cell, and determines a duration time between the receptions (or detections) of the NG-cells. Then the device estimates the number of consecutive receptions of the OK-cells by dividing the duration time by a cell receiving cycle, and stores the number into a determination table. Next, the device executes quality degradation determining operation whenever the NG-cell is received, after a predetermined number of NG-cells are received, that is, when the number of received NG-cells exceeds a determination threshold value.

[0019] In the quality degradation determining operation, the number of OK-cells received during reception of a certain number of NG-cells is calculated by using the determination table and the number of OK-cells is compared with the predetermined degradation threshold value.

[0020] The certain number for the NG-cells is defined by the determination threshold value. From the result of the comparison, quality degradation of the radio network is determined.

[0021] Referring to Fig. 2, description is made about a base station controlling device which may employ a combining device of an embodiment of the invention.

[0022] The base station controlling device 400 is connected to radio base stations 410 and 420, and to a mobile communication switch 430. The base station controlling device 400 also includes the following elements.

[0023] A highway interface 402 connects between the base station controlling device 400 and the radio base stations 410 and 420. A highway switching unit 402 executes switching operation or connecting operation among elements in the base station controlling device 400. A switching controlling unit 403 controls the highway switching unit 402. An upstream combining device 500 has function which can combine received upstream signals and function which can determine quality degradation of radio network. A CODEC 404 carries out coding/decoding of voice signals. A highway interface 405 connects between the base station controlling device 400 and the mobile communication switch 430.

[0024] Next, the upstream combining device 500 is described in more detail with reference to Fig. 3.

[0025] The upstream combining device 500 receives upstream frames from the radio base stations 410 and 420, combines cells, and sends the cells to the next device, such as the CODEC 404. The upstream combining device 500 includes the following elements.

[0026] An upstream receiving unit 510 receives cells from the radio base station 410 and 420 and sends the cells to a combining unit 520.

[0027] The combining unit 520 is supplied with a sequence of receiving cells from the radio base stations 410 and 420 over a plurality of radio frames and selects the best quality of cell among receiving cells, which are received in the same radio frame period.

[0028] Also, the combining unit 520 determines whether radio CRC information of the selected cell is "OK" or "NG", and informs a controlling unit 530 that NG-cell is received when the radio CRC information is "NG".

[0029] In the previous combining unit 620 shown in Fig. 1, regardless of the contents of the radio CRC information, the controlling unit 630 always receives the information. On the contrary, the combining unit 520 of the embodiment of the invention informs the controlling unit 530 of the information only when the information represents NG (hereinafter, referred to as NG information). Furthermore, the combining unit 520 has time information synchronizing with the radio frame, and informs the controlling unit 530 of a time of combining (or detecting) the NG-cell when the combining unit 520 informs of the NG information. It is not required that the time information is standard time, since the time information is used to determine the time difference between a time when the current NG-cell is combined/detected and a time when the previous NG-cell is combined/detected.

[0030] The controlling unit 530 includes a degradation determining unit 531, a time storing unit 532, a setting value storing unit 533 and a determination table storing unit 534. The degradation determining unit 531 executes determination operation of quality degradation of radio network as described later. The time storing unit 532 stores the time information which is received from the combining unit 520 along with the NG information. The setting value storing unit 533 stores a predetermined cell receiving cycle, the determination threshold value, and the degradation threshold value. The determination table storing unit 534 stores the determination table 200.

[0031] The upstream frame sending unit 540 sends a next device a received cell which is combined in the combining unit 520.

[0032] Next, description is made about a layout of the determination table 200 with reference to Fig. 4. The determination table 200 includes a table pointer field 201, a determination OK number field 202, and a plurality of OK number fields 203. The table pointer field 201 stores a number representing an entry of one of the OK number fields 203 in which an estimated OK number is

recently stored. The determination OK number field 202 stores the number of OK-cells which is a sum of the numbers of OK-cells stored in a certain number (described later) of the OK number fields. Each of the OK number fields 203 stores a value which is obtained by dividing a duration time between a detection time of an NG-cell and a detection time of the next NG-cell in the cell receiving cycle. That is, the value stands for the number of OK-cells between the two consecutive NG-cells. In this example, the determination table 200 includes 128 entries of the OK number fields [1], [2], [3], ... [128].

[0033] Next, description is made about the determining operation or quality degradation of radio network by the combining unit 520 and the controlling unit 530 with reference to Fig. 5.

[0034] The combining unit 520 shown in Fig. 3 informs the degradation determining unit 531 of the NG information, and time information which includes NG-cell detected time when it is determined that a received cell is the NG-cell (steps A1 and A2).

[0035] When the degradation determining unit 531 receives the NG information and the time information, the unit 531 determines whether or not the number of NG-cells which has been detected until now exceeds the determination threshold value by referring to the table pointer 201 stored in the determination table 200 and the determination threshold value stored in the setting value storing unit 533 (step A3).

[0036] In the case where the first NG-cell is received (step A4), the degradation determining unit 531 receives the time information from the combining unit 520 and stores the time information into the time storing unit 532 (step A5).

[0037] Thereafter, when the second NG-cell is received, the degradation determining unit 531 repeats the following operations (1) to (3) for each NG-cell reception while the number of the received NG-cells is less than the determination threshold value, to store the number of the OK-cells between the previous NG-cell and the current NG-cell into the corresponding OK number field in the determination table 200 and to store the time information which is received along with the current NG-cell into the time storing unit 532.

[0038] The operation (1) is for calculating a duration time from the time difference between the time when the current NG-cell is received from the combining unit 520 and the time which is stored in the time storing unit 532 and which is related to the reception of the previous NG-cell (step A6).

[0039] The operation (2) is for dividing the duration time by the cell receiving cycle to estimate the number of OK-cells which are received between the previous NG-cell and the current NG-cell (step A7).

[0040] The operation (3) is for storing the number of the OK-cells which is calculated in the above step (2) into the corresponding OK number field 203 in the determination table 200 (step A8). For example, when

the second NG-cell is received, the number of the OK-cells is stored into an OK number [2] and when the third NG-cell is received, the number of the OK-cells is stored into an OK number [3].

[0041] Then, when the degradation determining unit 531 receives the same number of NG-cells as the determination threshold value, the unit 531 executes the same operations as the above operations (1) to (3) (steps A9 to A11) and sums up the numbers in the corresponding OK number fields 203 in the determination table 200 to obtain the determination OK number (step A12). For example, when the determination threshold value is set to four and the fourth NG-cell is received, the unit 531 sums up the numbers from the OK number [2] to the OK number [4].

[0042] In other words, numbers in plural entries of OK number fields 203 are successively summed up from a previous entry of the OK number fields 203 to the current entry of the OK number fields 203. The previous entry is given by decreasing the determination threshold nine by two. The current entry is the entry to which the number of OK-cells is stored in response to reception of the currently received NG-cell.

[0043] Next, the unit 531 compares the obtained determination OK number with the predetermined degradation threshold value (step A13). If the determination OK number is less than or equal to the degradation threshold value, the unit 531 determines that quality degradation of radio network occurs (step A14). In this case, the unit 531 transmits the combining unit 500 of the quality degradation outside of the unit 531, and in response to the information, the base station controlling device 400 may direct each mobile station to provide a greater amount of electric power or to change its selected base stations (step A15).

[0044] Thereafter, the unit 531 updates the time storing unit with the time information which is appended to the currently received NG information (step A5).

[0045] Now, description is made about operations related to the determination table 200 with reference to Fig. 6. When the NG-cell is received, the determination table 200 is updated through the following steps:

- (1) a value in the table pointer field 201 is incremented by 1;
- (2) the number of OK-cells between the NG-cells is stored into an entry of the OK number field 203. Herein, the entry is shown by the value of the table pointer field 201; and
- (3) the determination OK number is calculated as described later and the resulting value is stored in the determination OK number field 202.

[0046] Herein, it is assumed that the degradation threshold value is set to 10,000 and the determination threshold value is set to four.

[0047] Fig. 6A shows reception timing of the NG-cells. An NG-cell is received at each of the time points [a] to

[e] shown in Fig. 6A. In Fig. 6A, values shown between two time points stands for estimated numbers of OK-cells received between the two time points.

[0048] Referring to Fig. 6B, the determination table 200 is shown when no NG-cell is received yet.

[0049] Fig. 6C shows the determination table 200 at the time point [a], that is, when the first NG-cell is received. In this case, only a value in the table pointer 201, which is set to zero as initial value, is incremented by one (as a result, = one).

[0050] Fig. 6D shows the determination table 200 at the time point [b], that is, when the second NG-cell is received. In this case, a value in the table pointer 201 is incremented by one (as a result, = two) and the OK number [2] is set to 5,000.

[0051] Fig. 6E shows the determination table 200 at the time point [c], that is, when the third NG-cell is received. In this case, a value in the table pointer 201 is incremented by one (as a result, = three) and the OK number [3] is set to 7,000.

[0052] Fig. 6F shows the determination table 200 at the time point [d], that is, when the forth NG-cell is received. In this case, a value in the table pointer 201 is incremented by one (as a result, = four) and the OK number [4] is set to 2,000. Further, since the number of received NG-cells (= four) is equal to the determination threshold value (= four), the determination OK number is obtained by adding the OK number [2], [3], and [4]. As a result, the determination OK number is set to 14,000

and is greater than the degradation threshold value (= 10,000), therefore, it is determined that the quality degradation does not occur.

[0053] Fig. 6G shows the determination table 200 at the time point [e], that is, when the fifth NG-cell is received. In this case, a value in the table pointer 201 is incremented by one (as a result, = five) and the OK number [5] is set to 200. Further, since the number of received NG-cells (= five) is greater than the determination threshold value (= four), the determination OK number is obtained by adding the OK number [3], [4], and [5]. As a result, the determination OK number is set to 9,200 and is less than the degradation threshold value (= 10,000), therefore, it is determined that the quality degradation occurs.

[0054] According to the invention, the quality degradation determining unit determines quality degradation of radio network only when an NG-cell which is checked as incorrect by CRC is received. Therefore, it is no need to execute quality degradation determining operation for every reception of a call, as a result, overall operation performance is improved.

[0055] Also, even if there are periods which no cell is received under VOX control, inaccurate quality degradation determining operation using a past NG-cell reception history is not executed since the periods may be determined as periods which the OK-cells are received.

[0056] The above descriptions has been made with

reference the embodiment of the invention, but it is clear that the scope of the invention should not be limited to the embodiment and amendment, alteration, and improvement to the invention may be easily done by ordinary people in the related art.

Claims

1. A method of determining quality degradation of a radio network based on results of detecting an error detection each of messages received through the network, the results including a first state representing detection of an error from each message and a second state representing no detection of any error from each message, the method comprises the steps of:
 - storing a first threshold value;
 - estimating the number of the messages of the second state while the number of the first threshold value of the messages of the first state are received; and
 - determining that quality degradation of the radio network occurs when the messages of the second state is less in number than a second predetermined threshold value.
2. The method of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of counting of the messages of the second state further comprises the steps of:
 - determining each duration time between a time related to one of the messages of the first state and another time related to another message of the first state next to the one of the message of the first state;
 - calculating, for each duration time, the number of the messages of the second state received between the duration time by dividing the duration time by a message receiving cycle; and
 - summing up the numbers of the messages of the second state to obtain the overall numbers of the messages of the second state.
3. The method of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in claim 2, wherein the messages on the network are configured as cells which are provided on the radio network.
4. The method of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in claim 2 or 3, wherein the time related to the message of the first state of message is the time when the message is determined as the message of the first state.
5. The method of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the error detection is done by CRC.
6. The method of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the method is applied to a CDMA mobile communication system.
7. A device of determining quality degradation of the radio network based on results of error detection from each of messages received through the network, the results including a first state representing detection of an error from each message and a second state representing no detection of any error from each message, comprising:
 - a detector (520) which informs of only existences of the messages of the first state which are detected by the error detection;
 - a storage device (533) which stores a first threshold value and a second threshold value;
 - an estimating circuit (531) which estimates the number of the messages of the second state received while the number of the first threshold value of messages of the first state are received; and
 - a determining circuit (531) which determines that quality degradation of the radio network occurs when the number of the messages of the second state is less than the second threshold value.
8. The device of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in claim 7, wherein the storage device (533) further includes a message receiving cycle, and the estimating circuit (531) estimates the number of the messages of the second state by determining each duration time between a time related to one of the message of the first state and another time related to another messages of the first state next to the one of the message of the first state, by calculating, for each duration time, the number of the messages of the second state by dividing the duration time by the message receiving cycle, and by summing up the numbers of the messages of the second state to obtain the overall numbers of the messages of the second state.
9. The device of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in claim 8, wherein the messages received through the network are configured as cells which are provided on the radio network.
10. The device of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in claim 8 or 9, wherein the time related to the message of the first state is the time when the message is determined as the

message of the first state.

11. The device of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in one of claims 7 to 10, wherein the error detection is done by CRC. 5

12. The device of determining quality degradation of the radio network claimed in one of claims 7 to 11, wherein the device is applied to a CDMA mobile communication system. 10

13. A computer readable medium which stores a program operable for determining quality degradation of the radio network based on results of detecting an error from each of messages received through the network, the results including a first state representing detection of an error from each message and a second state representing no detecting of any error from each message, the program comprising the steps of: 15
20

storing a first threshold value;
estimating the number of the messages of the second state received while the number of the first threshold value of the messages of the first state are received; and
determining that quality degradation of the radio network occurs when the number of the messages of the second state is less than a second predetermined threshold value. 25
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14. A computer program comprising program code means for performing the steps of anyone of claims 1 to 6. 35

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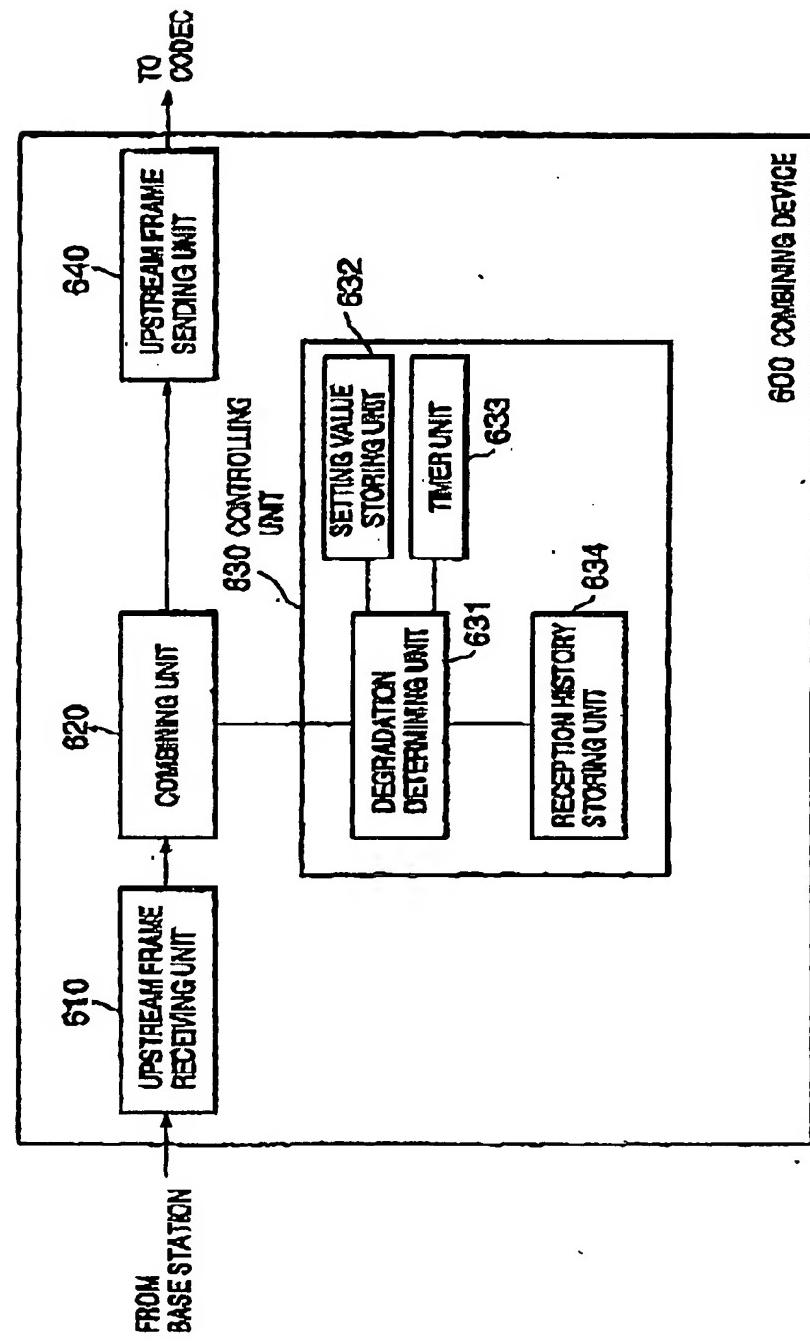


FIG.1 PRIOR ART

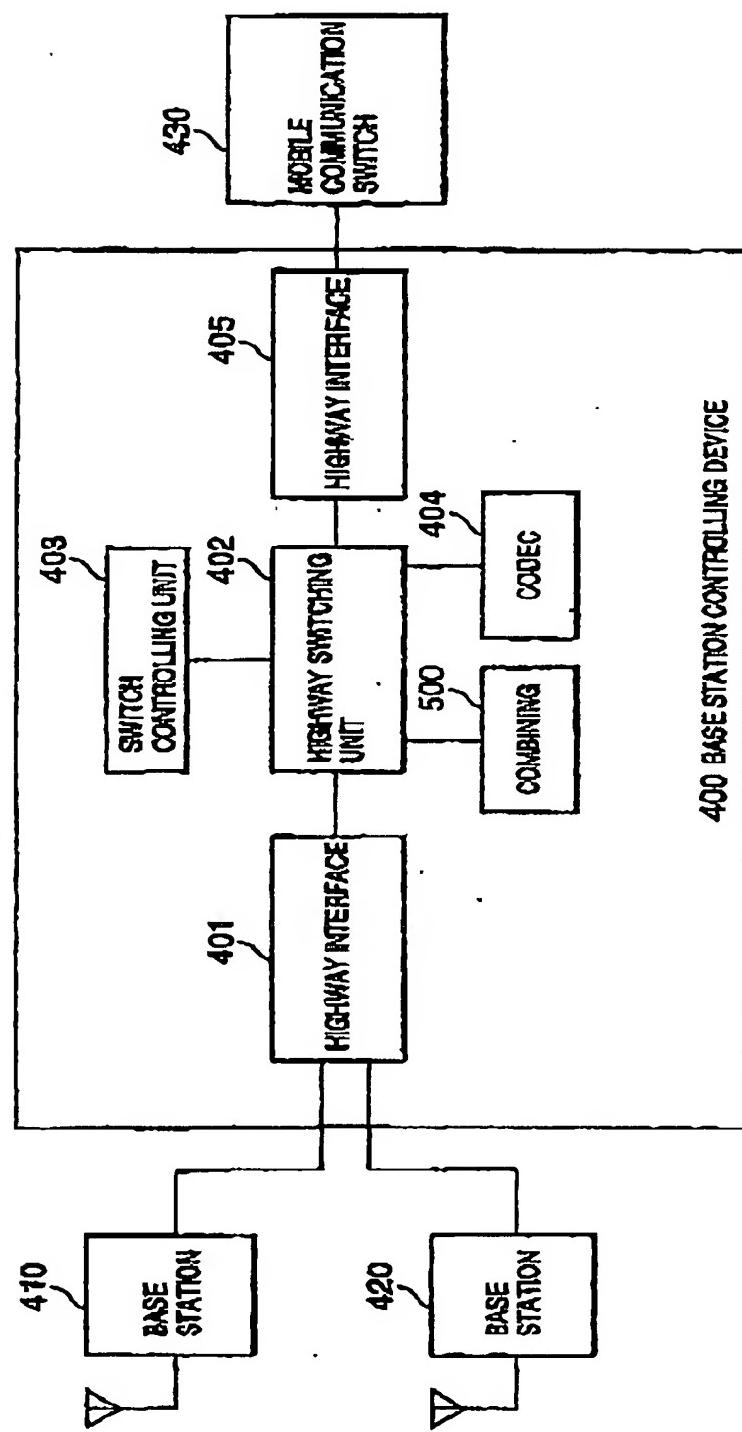


FIG.2

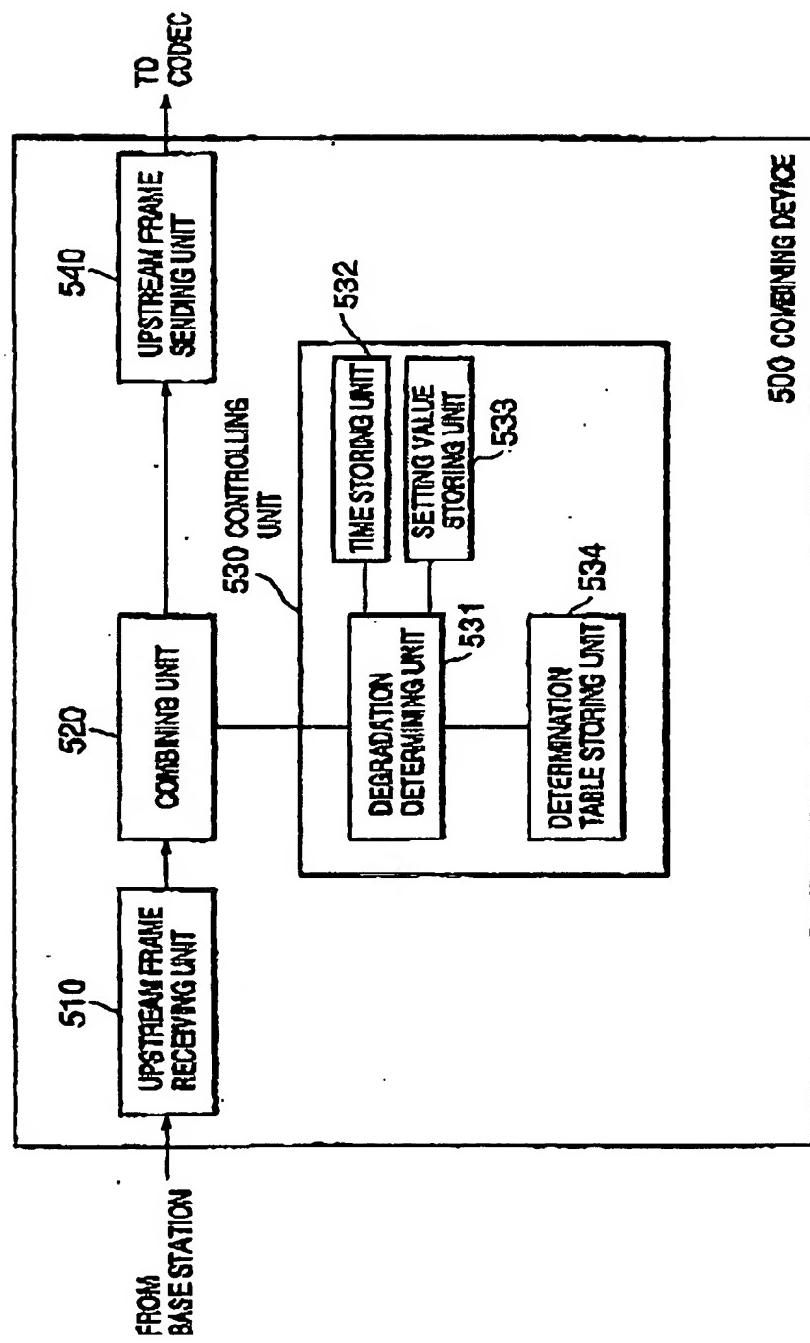


FIG.3

201	TABLE POINTER	0
202	DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	0
203	OK NUMBER [1]	0
	OK NUMBER [2]	0
	⋮	⋮
	OK NUMBER [128]	0

200 DETERMINATION TABLE

FIG.4

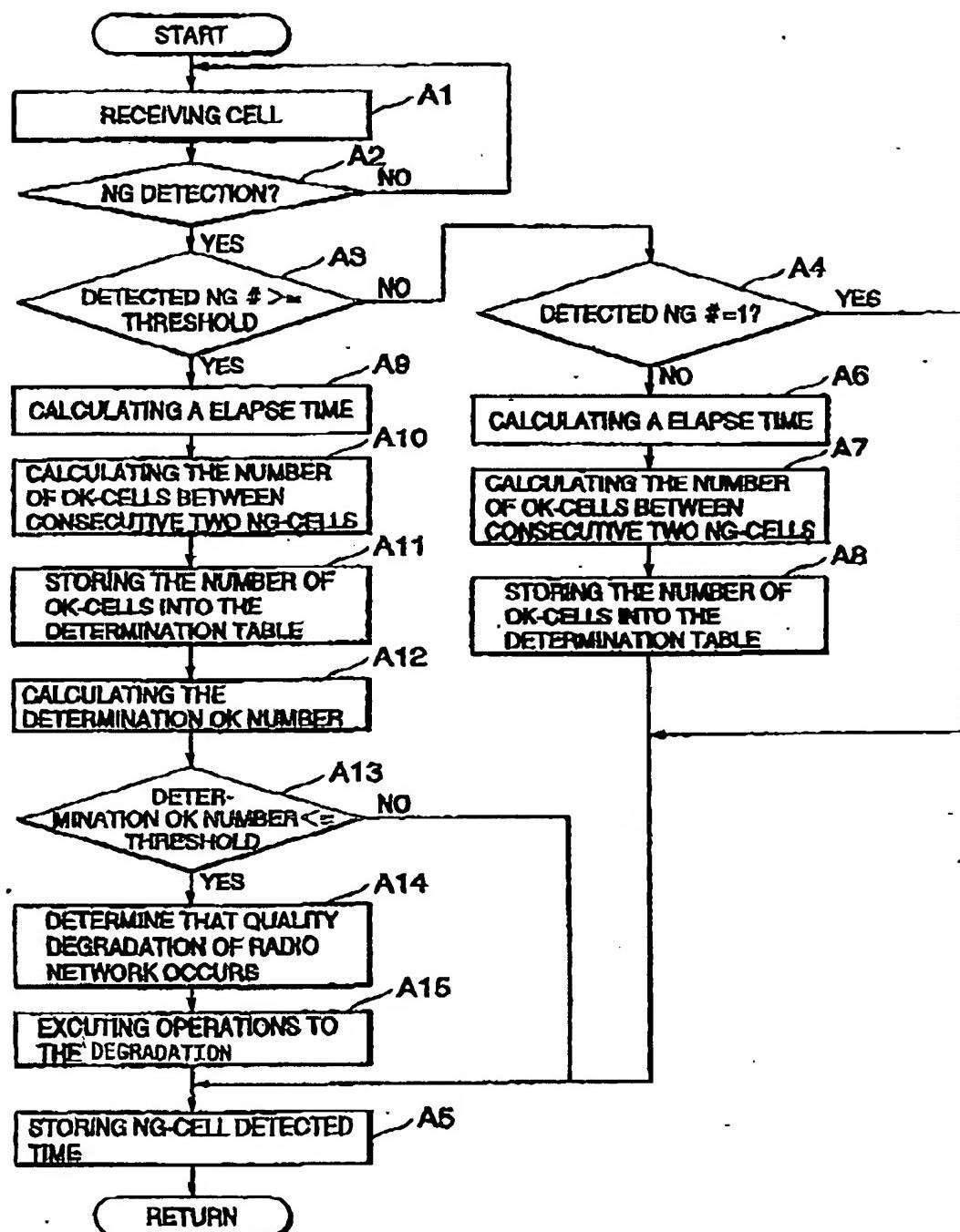


FIG.5

FIG.6A

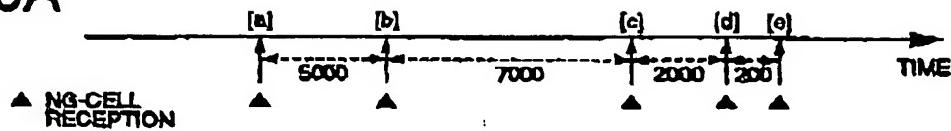


FIG.6B

TABLE POINTER	0
DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	0
OK NUMBER [1]	0
OK NUMBER [2]	0
OK NUMBER [3]	0
OK NUMBER [4]	0
OK NUMBER [5]	0
⋮	⋮
OK NUMBER [128]	0

FIG.6C

TABLE POINTER	1
DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	0
OK NUMBER [1]	0
OK NUMBER [2]	0
OK NUMBER [3]	0
OK NUMBER [4]	0
OK NUMBER [5]	0
⋮	⋮
OK NUMBER [128]	0

FIG.6D

TABLE POINTER	2
DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	0
OK NUMBER [1]	0
OK NUMBER [2]	5000
OK NUMBER [3]	0
OK NUMBER [4]	0
OK NUMBER [5]	0
⋮	⋮
OK NUMBER [128]	0

FIG.6E

TABLE POINTER	3
DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	0
OK NUMBER [1]	0
OK NUMBER [2]	5000
OK NUMBER [3]	7000
OK NUMBER [4]	0
OK NUMBER [5]	0
⋮	⋮
OK NUMBER [128]	0

FIG.6F

TABLE POINTER	4
DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	14000
OK NUMBER [1]	0
OK NUMBER [2]	5000
OK NUMBER [3]	7000
OK NUMBER [4]	2000
OK NUMBER [5]	0
⋮	⋮
OK NUMBER [128]	0

FIG.6G

TABLE POINTER	5
DETERMINATION OK NUMBER	8200
OK NUMBER [1]	0
OK NUMBER [2]	5000
OK NUMBER [3]	7000
OK NUMBER [4]	2000
OK NUMBER [5]	200
⋮	⋮
OK NUMBER [128]	0

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